

***Examiner's Amendment***

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Martin Weeks on 3/18/2011.

The application has been amended as follows:

**IN THE CLAIMS**

Cancel claims 33, 34, 37, and 38.

**Statement of Reasons for Allowance**

The present claims are allowable over the closest prior art Mohanty (US 2003/0216496) and Suzuki (US 6,583,208) for the following reasons:

Mohanty discloses a polylactic acid-based nanocomposite comprising PLA, an organically modified clay (i.e., organoclay), and a coupling agent.

Suzuki discloses a polyester resin composition (not explicitly polylactic acid) having improved flexural modulus of elasticity, flexural strength, deflection temperature under load, and dimensional stability comprising a thermoplastic polyester and a silane-treated phyllosilicate which is treated with  $Y_nSiX_4-n$ , wherein  $n = 0-3$ , Y is a hydrocarbon group having 1-15 carbon atoms such as alkyl and can be substituted with an amide group, and X is a hydrolysable group such as amino and/or hydroxyl group.

Neither of these references discloses or suggests that the silyl group is substituted with an epoxyethyl group, an epoxyethoxy group, a 1-phenylvinyl group, a 4-vinylphenyl group, an isocyanate group, an N-oxymethyleneamino group, or an N,N-di(oxymethylene)amino group.

Thus, it is clear that the references, taken individually or in combination, do not disclose or suggest the claimed invention.

In light of the above, it is clear that rejections of record are untenable and thus the present claims are passed to issue.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

### **Conclusion**

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Vickey Nerangis whose telephone number is (571) 272-2701. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David Wu can be reached on (571) 272-1114. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

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/Vickey Nerangis/  
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 1762